

portions of their industries. And if such industries have problems, it is not due to FPI. On textiles, for example, I was told that 600,000 jobs were lost over the last 10 years. Where there are approximately 7,000 prisoners working in textiles in FPI, we certainly cannot blame 7,000 prisoners for the loss of 600,000 jobs.

The program generates almost as much business as it takes in by pumping three quarters of the roughly \$600 million it takes in back into the economy to purchase supplies and whatnot, primarily from small minority and women-owned and disadvantaged businesses. The FPI has received awards for spending almost 60 percent of its expenditures in these small and disadvantaged businesses.

I am the first to concede that there may be problems with FPI which should be fixed. When a small business making a single product such as an Army helmet is dependent on the Department of Defense for contracts for its operations, FPI should not be able to take away that business. But this bill should be fixing the problems not by gutting it by taking away all its primary source of contracts. And while the bill suggests that the lack of competition is a problem, the bill seeks to stranglehold FPI as a competitor not only by strengthening the prohibitions against activities in the commercial market but also in the government as well. We are already seeing the effects of a Department of Defense restriction in FPI passed last year. The information I have obtained from the program indicates that it has already had to close 13 factories and eliminate over 1,700 inmate jobs and expects to eliminate an additional 500 jobs before the end of the year.

We should fix these problems, but we should do so in a way that assures the viability of the vital crime-reducing program. With additional prisons scheduled to come on line over the next few years, we can ill afford to diminish the successful crime-reduction program. But for their crimes and imprisonment, they are indistinguishable from the rest of us; and treating them as if they are a foreign competitor and viewing the work as private businesses, we should not be in a position where the policy of the committee with oversight responsibility for the safe and efficient operation of our prisons should be at risk.

Mr. Speaker, these are important jobs. This program reduces crime. We can do better than just gut the entire program with a meat ax approach. We can improve the program without ending it. So I would hope that we would defeat the rule and, if the rule passes, defeat the bill.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his leadership.

I rise in support of this rule and in support of the bill that will protect the jobs of American taxpayers. In a time when 3 million workers have lost their jobs, we should be doing everything possible to keep workers employed. FPI is not competing on a level playing field. It pays its workers pennies and is not required to pay taxes. With its predatory practices, FPI has contributed to the closure of private companies and the loss of tens of thousands of jobs throughout our Nation.

With its predatory practices, I confronted them in 1997 when they tried to close one of my constituent's company, Glamour Glove. FPI sought to simply come in and take away all the competitively won contracts with the Department of Defense to make military gloves. If they had succeeded, Glamour Glove would be out of business and the workers of UNITE! would have been out of work. Outraged, I appeared before the FPI board with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA), who was facing similar challenges in his own district, and we were successful in negotiating and saving these jobs; but this effort led to the bill that we have before us today.

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It has been a 7-year effort. I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) for helping me save the jobs in Glamour Glove and for his work on this legislation.

By passing this bill, we will save thousands of jobs across this country, and we will protect competition. We will allow the prison industries to compete with hardworking, tax-paying workers in America. This legislation will ensure that contracts are awarded to the company that will provide the best products, delivered on time and at the best prices, thereby saving not only jobs, but taxpayer dollars; in short, the way the free market is supposed to operate.

The bill has large bipartisan support, over 140 of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and it has support both from the business community, led by the Chamber of Commerce, and organized labor, led by the AFL-CIO.

Passage of this legislation will not mean that inmates will sit idly in prison. It also requires and provides for alternative rehabilitative opportunities, including work in support of nonprofit public service organizations, to better prepare inmates for a successful return to society.

I urge my colleagues to put an end to this unfair, government-sponsored monopoly, which really would be more at home in communist Russia, under Fidel Castro or in mainland China, where people are paid pennies for their work, where there is no competition and workers are stripped of their jobs and thrown out on the street and not even given an opportunity to compete.

This allows our workers to compete. It will save jobs. It is good for America, it is good for workers, and it is good for business. I urge a yes vote on the underlying bill and the rule.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), my good friend from Chicago.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, at first blush, I thought that this was a good bill, good piece of legislation, that it made some sense. But then I thought about the fact that the goal of our prison system really should be to try and make sure that individuals are better off when they leave than they were when they got there.

If they cannot read, we need to teach them how to read; if they cannot write, we should teach them how to write; if they have got drug problems, we should give them counseling and treatment; if they do not have job skills, if they have never had a work ethic, then we ought to provide opportunities for them to learn what work is all about.

We ought to provide an opportunity for them to develop a skill, so that when they get out, there is something that they can do, other than stand on the corner and holler "crack and blow," or "pills and thrills." Any diminution of opportunity for these individuals to work is not in the best interest of America. It will cause recidivism, and those who get out will be right back. So I would urge us to look seriously.

I understand competition. I understand small business. I am an avid supporter of small business, but I believe that we would do much more harm than good by denying any single person incarcerated the opportunity to work and learn a skill.

I will vote no, and urge that we reject this rule and this bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 76, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2004

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 430 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 430

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in

the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 76) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2004, and for other purposes. The joint resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the joint resolution equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 430 is a closed rule that provides for the consideration of H.J. Res. 76, a continuing resolution that will ensure further appropriations for fiscal year 2004. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution and provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, we passed the first continuing resolution, H.J. Res. 69, in late September, continuing appropriations through October. The provisions of H.J. Res. 75, which was the second CR enacted by this Congress, are scheduled to expire this Friday, November 7.

Under the joint resolution that H. Res. 430 makes in order, the provisions of that second continuing resolution would be extended until November 21, 2003. In brief, for the fiscal year 2004 appropriations bills that have not yet been enacted into law, the CR provides 2 additional weeks of funding for those Federal departments and agencies whose operations depend on the enactment of those appropriations.

We are approaching the completion of this first session of the 108th Congress, but there are a number of appropriations bills and other must-do legislative priorities that we are working to resolve. Additional time is needed. Nonetheless, it is our goal to have this represent the last continuing resolution, as the appropriators are working hard to complete conference reports and are moving toward making the tough decisions that will lead us to the end of the appropriations process for this year. This continuing resolution gives us the time needed to complete this process in an orderly manner.

The Committee on Rules approved this rule yesterday. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, since George W. Bush got his job and Republicans took over the entire Federal Government, nearly 3 million Americans have lost their jobs. So, under these circumstances, you might think the Republicans who control the town and the government and CBS would be very conscientious about doing their jobs. But here we are, once again, passing yet another continuing resolution to keep the government running because the Republican Congress refuses to do the most fundamental job the American people have given to it. While millions of Americans cannot find any jobs, Republicans refuse to do the jobs that they have and the taxpayers pay us to do. The House has not put in a full week's worth of work in months.

So what is the problem Mr. Speaker? After all, the Republicans control this body, the other body, the Presidency. Are they stuck haggling with each other over how much to shortchange schools this year? Or looking for an excuse to continue penalizing disabled veterans? Or arguing over which slick procedural trick to use to try to hide the hundreds of billions of dollars in debt they have run up?

Well, one thing is for sure, you know this is not a Republican Party priority, because when the Republican Party wants something, the Republican Party is ruthlessly efficient.

Just take a look at the record. When it comes to Republican priorities, like tax breaks for the small, elite group of big contributors who fund Republican campaigns, this Congress has been tremendously successful. But when it comes to the priorities of the American people, like tax relief for the military and working families, this Congress cannot or will not get it done.

Mr. Speaker, Republican leaders have protected big corporate tax dodgers, but Republicans will not do anything about the high health care costs or help the millions of Americans who need unemployment insurance in the midst of President Bush's jobless recovery. They actually blocked a Democratic pay raise for the military, which would have given the soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan a \$1,500 bonus.

Mr. Speaker, I fear this is not a government of the people, by the people and for the people. It is a government of the Republican Party, by the Republican Party, and for the Republican Party.

Unfortunately, the rest of America does not seem to matter. Today, millions of hardworking Americans no longer share in the prosperity they enjoyed during the Democrat-led economic boom of the nineties. George W. Bush has compiled the worst record of job loss of any President since Herbert Hoover in the Great Depression. Some

1.4 million Americans have been unemployed for so long in this economy that they have exhausted their unemployment insurance. After the end of this year, Americans who lose their jobs, people like the nearly 3 million jobs lost since President Bush took office, will not be able to enroll in unemployment insurance.

Over that same period, the Republican fiscal irresponsibility turned record surpluses into astronomical and out-of-control deficits, increasing the debt tax on all Americans and threatening the future of Medicare and Social Security. And it is getting worse. In the coming years, the tax breaks for the wealthiest few will become even more expensive, at the same time that the Bush administration will be asking taxpayers to send untold hundreds of billions of dollars to Iraq.

This government has no plan to clean up the mess it has made of America. Instead, they just keep offering more of the same and hope the American people will not notice that their Congress has stopped working for them, because it is too busy using the power of the people's government to protect the privileges of their party.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING FIREFIGHTERS AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO RESPONDED TO 2003 CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 425) recognizing and honoring the firefighters and other public servants who responded to the October 2003, historically devastating, outbreak of wildfires in Southern California.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 425

Whereas in late October 2003, Southern California simultaneously experienced a number of devastating wildfires destroying thousands of homes, taking many lives, and burning hundreds of thousands of acres of grasslands and forests exceeding the devastation of any fires in the past century;

Whereas in the space of a few days, all of the resources of local firefighting companies were called upon to man fire lines on first one and then on many fronts;

Whereas firefighters were thrown into extraordinarily dangerous situations because of the fast-moving, fuel- and wind-driven fires;

Whereas firefighters exhibited resilience and courage in continuing to stay on the lines often in back-to-back shifts while knowing, in some instances, that their own families were in danger or that their personal homes had been lost and even giving the ultimate sacrifice of life;